

Council for Labor & Economic Growth  
Tackling Workforce Issues Facing Key Industry Sectors Committee Meeting  
Amerisure Mutual Insurance Company  
Tuesday, July 31, 2007  
1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

**In Attendance**

Industry Sector Committee Members – Derick Adams, Committee Chair, Amerisure Mutual Insurance Company; Bradley Dyer, Michigan Human Resources Development, Inc.; Norma Hagenow, Committee Vice-Chair (via phone), Genesys Health System; Eleanor Josaitis, Focus: HOPE; Jaye Shamsiddeen (via phone), Michigan Rehabilitation Services

Guests – Anne Mervenne, Focus: HOPE

Staff – Janice Cooper, DLEG; Tammy Coxen, CSW; Vicki Enright, DLEG; Matt Shields, DLEG

**Purpose**

Identify educational attainment needs and solutions in key industry sectors. We've learned that working with employers through alliances within key sectors is an effective way to understand and help resolve workforce challenges facing multiple companies in an industry. This committee meeting was called to analyze and recommend to the Governor the most crucial needs, opportunities, and required actions the state should undertake to help employers in Advanced Manufacturing succeed.

**CLEG Charge**

The committee was given the CLEG Charge and held a brief discussion to build consensus around what their committees charge was. Included in the discussion were these issues:

- What does the industry need and how do we prepare the workforce for that need?
- Recommendations should focus around the following 3 points
  - What are the most crucial educational attainment needs
  - What opportunities exist that the state should capitalize on
  - What specific actions should the state undertake to help employers in advanced manufacturing succeed
- Recommendations should consider economic development and incumbent worker training (IWT) policies

**Advanced Manufacturing Industry Overview**

- Manufacturing jobs in Michigan continue to decline, however, manufacturing remains the leading source of jobs in the state

- While we are losing jobs in some of the traditional manufacturing occupations, there is a tremendous opportunity to gain jobs in high tech/high skill advanced manufacturing occupations
- There is a real need to market engineering and high-tech education and training

### **Formulating Recommendations for CLEG and the Governor**

The purpose of the committee meeting was to come away with specific recommendations to take to the full CLEG for the advanced manufacturing industry sector. The recommendations should take into consideration specific actions the state should take in the next 90 days, 1 year, and long term. Included in the discussions were these issues:

- Incumbent Worker Training dollars should be directed toward advanced manufacturing training
  - Brad Dyer said south central Michigan uses a large portion of their IWT funds for upgrading skills in manufacturing, especially in companies that are bringing in new technology
  - IWT policies should be revised to allow IWT funds to be packed and directed towards advanced manufacturing and apprenticeship programs
  - Should there be a direct connection between state identified key industries and how IWT funds are used
  - Need to identify public funds available for training and what the limitations to employers are
  - Need to encourage business to support training programs by providing funds where gaps exist and public funds cannot be used
- Re-invigorating apprenticeship programs throughout the state
  - Employers need funds to help support all phases of the apprenticeship training process (loss in production, cost of training, etc.)
  - Need to identify existing apprenticeship programs
  - Need to get existing employers involved in creating apprenticeship programs in non-traditional occupations
  - Need to promote options for training dollars to employees interested in pursuing apprenticeships
  - Apprenticeships are a post-secondary process that can result in more earning potential than Bachelor Level occupations
- Making assessment and development of soft skills a priority in the state's education and workforce development systems
  - Need to support the efforts of other committees, agencies, initiatives, etc. behind establishing Career Readiness Credentials (CRC)
  - Employers need to be a part of the CRC design to help build broad acceptance
  - Potential employees need to learn basic workplace culture skills; Can they show up on time, communicate with others effectively, and work with each other
  - Need to re-define soft skills as a portion of educational attainment

- Many states seem to have issues with soft skill development; It would make Michigan a pretty competitive place to do business if we could design a solution to the soft skill problems before other states do
- Benton Harbor has had a life skills training that includes 160 hours of simulated job setting where individuals learn workforce ready skills mixed with reading and math
- Need to develop a Soft Skill Continuum focused on attitudes, behaviors, and skills
- Need to instill life long learning as a concept in incumbent and dislocated workers
- Recommend a thorough review of what soft skills programs and initiatives are currently available and research best practices
- There is a need for a marketing/communication plan to bring positive focus to advanced manufacturing occupations
  - The state should capitalize on efforts underway at Detroit Renaissance
  - Need to change the perception of the industry and its careers
    - Need to show that there are viable careers in manufacturing
    - Need to demonstrate to parents and students that jobs exist
    - Need to demonstrate that manufacturing jobs today are not the same as traditional manufacturing jobs have been in the past; they are high-tech, high skill jobs
  - Need cooperation from the media to promote the positive aspects of the advanced manufacturing industry as opposed to the negative publicity of layoffs and plant closings
- Need to re-examine how we educate or educators
  - Need to develop the capacity to teach more/higher level math and science
  - Re-evaluate the continuing education that teachers receive to ensure that it is relevant to preparing the future workforce
  - Need to assist counselors and advisors in steering students toward high-tech/high skill jobs in manufacturing

### **Next Steps**

The committee will meet again August 13<sup>th</sup> at Genesys Health System to finalize recommendations for Advanced Manufacturing and to formulate recommendations for the Health Care Industry.